



2023 Farm Bill Priorities (Unofficial)

Montana Department of Agriculture

In addition to supporting the policy advocacy efforts of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the Montana Department of Agriculture seeks to further highlight four policy areas of significance to Montana.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

MDA supports increasing funding for research on the safety and security of our food system and the improvement and protection of our natural resources. Robust support for agricultural research including funding for extension programs and research infrastructure is vital to ensuring U.S. agriculture remains competitive globally.

Montana producers contribute over \$2.5 million dollars annually to fund scientific research that improves quality, production, and best farm practices. Federal match is essential to maximizing the producer's return on investment and maintain world class research facilities in Montana.

TRADE PROMOTION

MDA supports increasing the Market Access Program that promotes American grown and made food and agricultural products that are in competition with heavily subsidized foreign products. According to an Economic Impact Study of USDA Export Market Development Programs, for every one dollar invested in export market development programs, \$24 is returned in export revenue.

Montana's agriculture economy directly benefits from participation in the leadership and membership of many regional ag trade groups and federal cooperators ensuring Montana products are represented at the national and international levels.

HEMP

MDA recommends amending the federal definition of hemp to increase the total THC concentration to one percent or less. Increasing the THC concentration to one percent would enable farmers to plant more seed varieties. This action also retains limits on THC concentration while giving farmers greater assurance their crop will be viable.

In 2018, Montana led the country in planted hemp acres. Hemp represents a viable rotational crop and can help diversify income streams for Montana farmers.

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT

MDA recommends increasing funding for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program while ensuring a flexible, locally responsive and state-led program.

As the leading pulse crop producing state in the country, Montana receives significant funding for specialty crop promotion and research. These funds also support Montana's burgeoning wine, hops, berry, and cut-flower industries.